



E. MAE McCARROLL, M.D., 1898- 1990

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E. MAE MCCARROLL, A.B., M.D., M.S.P.H., 1898-

First Lady of the NMA

Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. I Cor., 16:13

The plaque below was presented as a surprise at the 78th Annual Convention of the NMA on August 14, 1973*, to the charming and gracious lady whose likeness adorns the cover of this number of the *Journal*, in token of the esteem in which she is universally held in the Association.

A member of the NMA since 1929, Dr. Ernest Mae McCarroll of Newark, N.J. has served 16 years on its

ventions and performed innumerable other services, the sum of which has been of inestimable value to the Association.

In her local and state NMA affiliate societies, Dr. McCarroll has been an equally ardent worker. She is a past president of the North Jersey Medical Society and of the New Jersey State Medical Association.

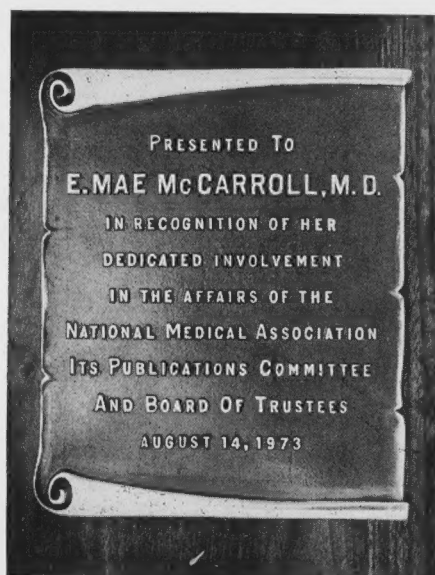
Her wide ranging contributions and her personal qualities establish Dr. McCarroll beyond challenge as "First Lady of the NMA."

Dr. McCarroll was born three quarters of a century ago in Birmingham, Alabama, the fourth of six children of Ernest Frank and Mary Prevard McCarroll. She received her early education in the public schools of Birmingham and her secondary training in the high school department of Talladega College in her native state. She received the A.B. from Talladega in 1917. After taking courses in chemistry and physics at Fisk University, she entered Woman's Medical College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, which awarded her the M.D. in 1925. Medicine as a career has been her own choice but the school selected was due to paternal objection to her going to medical school with men.

Dr. McCarroll served her internship at Kansas City General Hospital No. 2, Kansas City, Missouri, and then entered general practice in Philadelphia for two years. She married in 1929 and moved to Newark, N.J., where the remaining portion of her 48 fruitful years in the medical profession has been spent. This first marriage ended in divorce in 1939.

Dr. McCarroll's private practice in Newark began to prosper immediately and kept her ever busy until she formally closed her office in July 1973. Though always quiet and well poised, she has been continuously active in many civic and community affairs and was a leader of a Newark crusade to stamp out venereal disease in the early days of the New Deal of President Franklin D. Roosevelt when Dr. Thomas Parran was Surgeon General of the U.S. Public Health Service.

In 1934 she was appointed a Clinic Physician in the Venereal Disease Division of the Newark Department of Health and later became Assistant Epidemiologist for the City of Newark. She returned to school for further study and received the M.S.P.H. from the College of Physicians of Columbia University in 1939, and the



Board of Trustees, 1949-55, 1963-73. She has been a member of its Publication Committee for 32 years, since 1941, and was the chairman for 14 years, 1958-72. The programs which she arranged as chairman of the Public Health Committee in the thirties and forties have landmark significance in the history of the Association. She was chairman of the Committee on General Practitioner of the year Award from its inception in 1955 to its merger with the general Council on Awards in 1968. Dr. McCarroll has also served as chairman of the Committee on Time and Place for the Annual Con-

* Presented in absentia due to unavoidable circumstances.

following year pursued further postgraduate study at the Harvard School of Public Health.

In 1946 Dr. McCarroll became the first Afro-American physician to be appointed to the staff of the Newark City Hospital and in 1953 she was named Deputy Health Officer for the city. She was also accorded courtesy privileges at the Beth Israel Hospital of Newark.

In addition to the NMA and its affiliates, Dr. McCarroll has maintained memberships in the Essex County Medical Society, the State Medical Society of New Jersey, the American Public Health Association, the American Medical Association and the American Venereal Disease Association.

In her community Dr. McCarroll has been a board member of the Newark Branch of the NAACP, the Urban League of Essex County and the Fuld Neighborhood House. She was an organizer and advisor of the Neighborhood Guild and a member of the Advisory Committee of the National Alliance of Postal Employees. Other memberships include the Bethany Baptist Church, League of Women Voters, Daughters of Elks and the Delta Sigma Theta sorority.

On August 16, 1958, after the Milwaukee Convention of the NMA, Dr. McCarroll married Robert E. Brown of Newark.

It was the writer's privilege to get to know Dr. McCarroll best through her work with the *Journal* as a member and later chairman of the Publication Committee over the past 24 years. It was she who first advised the present editor in 1948 that he had been proposed for the post and inquired if he would like to be considered. She also indicated that there was a strong opposition which did not think he could be "controlled" if appointed. On receiving the reply that the progressive development of the *Journal* into a first class medical periodical which would enhance the image

of the NMA throughout the world presented an intriguing challenge, and, that he did not think the Association would want an editor who could be swayed by petty pressures, Dr. McCarroll expressed total assent. In 1948 the opposition prevailed, but when the next incumbent resigned after a year stating that the *Journal* had proved to be too much work, the current steward of the official organ, with Dr. McCarroll's advocacy, was named by unanimous vote of the Trustees in 1949.

The politically seasoned opposition, however, did not cease its efforts until the matter was decisively determined in 1954. Through all of this Dr. McCarroll never wavered in her support of the editor's goals for the *Journal*. Those who thought that she might be seduced by the various wiles of smooth persuaders, found that this quiet gentle lady of soft and mellifluous voice, was her own woman. With no persuasion she stood always steadfast in the faith.

This strength of character was not as widely known in the Association as it would have been had she chosen to allow her name to have been placed in nomination for the presidency of the NMA. There is no doubt, however, that the respect in which she was generally held within the organization would have made her its first woman president had she elected to run.

The NMA—past, present and future—is in the permanent debt of its "First Lady" who has radiated so much good, so far and so long.

W. MONTAGUE COBB, M.D.

N.B. For additional references to Dr. McCarroll's work see this *Journal*, v. 47, pp. 411, 416, 1955; and v. 55, pp. 367-368 (and cover), 1963.

